

Finding the Text of a Bill Using Texas Legislature Online

www.capitol.state.tx.us

(Covering bills from 1995 – Present)

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Prepared by the Collin County Law Library
Judy McCullough – ext. 4255 Katy Gill – ext. 4260

Contents

The Homepage
Getting Started

Finding a Bill: If You Know the Bill Number

Finding a Bill: Searching for Bills by Topic

Viewing a Bill

Step 1: The Homepage

Go to: www.capitol.state.tx.us

This is the central navigation point from which you can access the wealth of legislative information available on *Texas Legislature Online*. From here, you can link to the text and legislative history of bills from 1995 to present.



Step 2: Getting Started

Click on the “Legislation” tab located on the dark blue toolbar at the top of the homepage.

This will take you to a new screen that allows you to search for bills and review their status in a number of different ways.



Step 3: Finding a Bill

If You Know the Bill Number:

Click on “Bill Status.”

First select the appropriate Legislature from the Legislative Session box. Then enter the bill number. Sample formats for entering the bill number are provided. Now choose which information about the bill you would like to view first by selecting the radio button next to History, Actions, Text, or Sections Affected. Finally, click on the “Submit” button to send your request.

The screenshot shows the 'Texas Legislature Online' website. The 'Bill Status' section is active. Under 'Legislative Session', the '76TH REGULAR SESSION - 2001' is selected. The 'Bill Number' field is empty, with examples: SB97, HJR10, SR3, HCR5, HR4. The 'View' section has radio buttons for History, Actions, Text (selected), and Sections Affected. There are 'Submit' and 'Reset' buttons at the bottom.

Searching for Bills by Topic:

Click on “Text Search.”

First select the appropriate Legislature. Then place check marks next to the Chamber, Bill Type, and Version you are interested in. Remember: the more boxes you check, the more specific your search results will be. Next, choose the types of documents (i.e.: Bill Text, Fiscal Note, Bill Analysis, Amendment) you would like to search by placing a check mark next to all that apply. Then enter the topic keywords you would like to search for. Finally, click on the “Search” button to send your request.

The screenshot shows the 'Text Search' page. It includes dropdown menus for 'Legislature' (76th (2001) is selected) and 'Chamber' (House and Senate are checked). There are checkboxes for 'Bill Type' (Bill, Joint Resolution, Concurrent Resolution, Resolution) and 'Version' (Introduced, Engrossed, Enrolled, House Committee Report, Senate Committee Report). There are also checkboxes for 'Document' (Bill Text, Fiscal Note, Bill Analysis, Amendment). A 'Keywords' text box is present, along with 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons.

Step 4: Viewing a Bill

Once you have retrieved a bill, there are several different versions of the bill that you may view. The *Introduced Version* is the text of the bill as it was first introduced to the legislature. The *Engrossed Version* is the text of the bill after it has passed its originating house of the legislature. This version is then presented to the other house for approval. The *Enrolled Version* is the text of the bill as it is finally passed by BOTH houses of the legislature. This version is the final version of the bill as signed by the Governor; this version is known as “the law.”

The screenshot shows the 'Text' page for Bill HB 5 - Legislative Session: 77(R). It displays a table of versions with icons for each: Introduced Version, House Committee Report, Engrossed Version, Senate Committee Report, and Enrolled Version. The table also includes columns for Text, Fiscal Note, Analysis, Witness Lists, and Summary of Committee Action.

[Back to Top](#)

